

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL OF POPULAR LITERATURE

Science and Arts.

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 133.

SATURDAY, JULY 19, 1856.

PRICE 1½d.

THE EXTERNALS OF LITERATURE.

THERE are many, no doubt, to whom the artificial refinements in what may be termed the externals of literature, afford no pleasure; to whom a vellum copy, shining in gold and morocco, is no more acceptable than if it had been printed on dingy brown paper and bound in shabby sheepskin. Still, Milton has well said that a book is 'the precious life-blood of a master-spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life'; and why, then, should not such a treasure be enclosed in a worthy casket?

Dr Dibdin, the celebrated bibliographer, in his easy, enthusiastic manner thus depicts what he considers to be the *beau idéal* of a gentleman's pleasure-apartment, by which appellation the worthy doctor not inappropriately designates a library. Satin-wood bookcases, surmounted by chaste Etruscan vases, should surround the walls, and the floor be covered by a light-blue carpet, embroidered with roses, shaded in brown. The curtains should be in harmony; while a sprinkling of alabaster lamps, marble busts, and a very few choice paintings, complete the scene. Probably the most perfect, at any rate the most famous, apartment of this kind is the Aldine Cabinet in Spencer House, St James's Place, London, the town-residence of Earl Spencer. The walls, panelled with gilded palm-branches, support a semi-circular ceiling, adorned with compartments of gilt roses. The furniture is in keeping, neither too gaudy nor overabundant; yet the contents of a few mahogany bookcases, ranged about the walls, are more valuable than a jew's eye or a king's ransom. One case contains no less than fifty books from the press of the first English printer, Caxton; while its companion is filled with works printed by Wynkyn de Worde and Pynson, in the fifteenth century. The Caxtons alone are reckoned to be worth more than twelve thousand guineas, yet they are not considered to be of sufficient importance to give a name to the apartment; they and their English compeers must hide their diminished heads beside a complete set of Aldines printed on vellum. Another such collection does not exist in the whole world, and never did. Complete sets of works from the press of the three famous Venetians who rejoiced in the name of Aldus, there may be, but not all printed on vellum. In the early days of printing, a very few copies of each work were struck off on vellum, to be given as presents to great men, or to insure a more lasting existence to the book itself. Indeed, even at the present day, where book-connoisseurs are connected, it is not unusual to print a few copies of a new work on vellum, and these are ever sacredly preserved from

public profanity in the book-enlightened hands of the cognoscenti. More frequently, for a similar purpose, a few copies are printed on a larger paper than the others, with India proofs of the engravings, if any. As but a few of the Aldines were printed on vellum, it has been only by the independent labours of many book-collectors, extending over a long series of years, that a complete set was ultimately brought together. Their alleged money-value is enormous; and no one will be surprised to learn that their gorgeous bindings are fully commensurate with the extravagant estimation in which they are held.

The earliest books of the ancients were merely scrolls of loose leaves, kept together by being tied up in a cylindrical roll or volume. Subsequently, a sagacious wight, whose name is not preserved by history, conceived the idea of passing a cord through the ends of the leaves; and at last one Phillatius, an Athenian, earned a well-deserved statue from his grateful countrymen by teaching them to glue the edges of the leaves together: many a statue has since been erected for far less service conferred upon mankind. The Roman satirist Catullus gives us a good idea of the best books of his period. Ridiculing a contemporary poet, whose sonnets were trash, though his books were elegant, he says:

His paper is royal, not common or bad;
His wrappers and bosses are totally new;
His sheets, smoothed by pumice, are all ruled with lead,
And bound by a ribbon of rose-coloured hue.

The ribbon, *lorum*, was a thong of soft leather; the bosses, *umbilici*, were ornamental knobs of wood, metal, or ivory, at each end of the roller on which the book was rolled; and the pumice-stone, *pumex*, was used to give the leaves a glossy polish; and it is still an implement of the bookbinder's craft. We also learn from an epigram of Martial, that the Roman books were sprinkled with *cedrium*—an essential oil of cedar—to give them an agreeable smell, and preserve them from worms and insects. The title was written on an oblong piece of fine vellum, which was glued on the outside leaf, in such a position that it would be visible if the book were rolled up. When closed, the whole resembled a mounted map of the present day; and in such guise were the writings of Virgil and Cicero kept in the houses of Rome and Pompeii.

The next step in advance, from books of the preceding description, was gained by an improvement in their principal material. By an improved process of preparing the vellum, it was made capable of receiving writing on both sides; previously, it could only be written on one. It was then trimmed into squares or

parallelograms, and folded into double or quadruple folds. This was the first approach to the modern book-form; and the securing it required, constituted the commencement of the modern art of bookbinding.

The earliest known specimen of English book-binding is a Latin and Saxon psalter of the ninth century, lately in the Stowe Collection. It is rudely stitched with leathern thongs, and clumsily covered with oaken boards, having their corners defended by bosses of brass. But soon after its period, a revival of classical literature, chiefly through the efforts of Lanfranc, gave an onward impetus to the art of book-binding. Books came into demand, and in all the larger monasteries there was a room termed the *scriptorium*, solely appropriated to the writing and binding of books. Lay-encouragers of writing not unfrequently endowed the scriptorium with estates: to that of the convent of St Edmund's-Bury, there belonged two mills, with other property. The monks who applied themselves to book-making were more respected than their less useful fellows; for, as an old author says, they not only furthered knowledge, but avoided the sin-begetting vice of indolence. Herman, a skilful monkish binder, who came to England at the Conquest, soon rose to be bishop of Salisbury.

The patient zeal of the monkish binders raised their art to a high degree of excellence. Under the reign of Edward III., we read of a book covered with enamelled gold, and clasped with a ruby—having on one side a cross of diamonds, and on the other a *fleur-de-lis*, of the same precious stones; the pendant, or what we would now term the book-mark, was ornamented with white sapphires. The most interesting specimen of the taste and ingenuity of the old conventional scribes and binders still in existence, is the celebrated Bedford Missal, specially prepared for the valiant Duke John of Bedford, uncle of Henry VI., and regent of France, so well known to the readers of Shakespeare. It is ornamented with fifty-nine large miniatures—each occupying nearly a page—and one thousand smaller ones, displayed in brilliant borders of golden foliage, with variegated flowers—the letters are blue and gold. An enthusiastic antiquary and bibliographer has actually published a quarto volume on this very missal alone. But few books of a similar description are extant. Time, the worm, and the furious zeal of the early reformers, not unmixed with cupidity, have left but a few—now worth more than their weight in gold, to be carefully treasured in the great libraries of Europe. One way in which a conventional library was disposed of, is so very curious, as to be worth mention. In 1506, Joyce Rowse, the abbess of Rumsey, sold the books of her convent as waste-paper to purchase ale, a beverage which she and her nuns took great delight in. The scandal became notorious; but the sisterhood consisting exclusively of ladies of high birth, the bishop of the diocese was prevented from interfering till the library was destroyed and the last flagon of book-bought ale tipped.

The richest binding in existence is probably that known to antiquaries as the *Golden Manual of Prayers*, which belonged to Queen Elizabeth. It is bound in solid gold; a representation of the judgment of Solomon is elegantly delineated on one of the covers, the other representing Moses raising the brazen serpent. A loop attached to each cover shews that Elizabeth wore this book suspended by a gold chain from her girdle. This reminds us how the books that were placed in churches, for the benefit of the people, were chained to the reading-desks, on the principle of safe bind, safe find. Nor was the custom peculiar to churches alone; there is an ancient record still in existence which proves that one thousand book-chains were at one time used in the Bodleian Library at Oxford.

Strangely enough, the invention of printing at first acted detrimentally to the advancement of the art of bookbinding. Gorgeous envelopments, glistening in Genoa velvet, jewels, and gold, were almost necessarily the coexistents of elaborate writing and brilliant illuminations. Books, too, becoming more plentiful, decreased in value, and, as a consequence, were less splendidly bound; so we find that the early printed ones were covered with oaken boards and coarse leather, almost as clumsily as the Saxon psalter of the ninth century already referred to. As Pope says:

There Caxton slept, with Winkyn by his side,
One clasped in wood, and one in strong cow-hide.

The first grand improvement, forming the great epoch in the history of modern bookbinding, was the application of morocco; for this the world is indebted to that royal book-collector, Corvinus, king of Hungary. His library, consisting of 50,000 volumes, was the envy and wonder of the world. A small army of workmen was constantly employed in gilding, painting, and binding these books, every one of which was marked with the device of a crow holding a ring in its mouth, the Latin etymon of the name of the royal owner. Corvinus died in 1490, and but a few years afterwards his magnificent library was destroyed and scattered to the winds, when Buda was captured by the Turks under Sultan Solymán II. Not three hundred of the works it contained are now known to be in existence, and most of these are in the Imperial Library at Vienna. One, now in the public library of Brussels, is a Latin *Evangelistarium*, written in letters of gold on the finest vellum. This book, having fallen into the hands of Philip II. of Spain, was long preserved in the Escorial as a sacred relic: it was never shewn to strangers, except in the presence of ecclesiastics and nobles of high rank, who, with heads uncovered and bearing torches, reverentially stood in solemn silence round the golden casket in which it was enclosed.

Corvinus, then, has the credit of introducing morocco; but it was Jean Grolier, treasurer to Francis I. of France, and a munificent patron of learning and the arts, who brought it into fashion. Grolier's vast wealth, and official position as ambassador of France at the courts of Rome and Vienna, afforded him unusual facilities for collecting books, which he caused to be bound in the most tasteful and costly manner. Every volume displayed the liberality of its possessor, for all were lettered with the epigraph, *Grolieri et Amicorum*—Grolier and his friends. A contemporary writer, describing a dinner-party at Grolier's house in Rome, at which Aldus, the celebrated Venetian printer, and men connected with literature, were present, states that, after dinner, Grolier gave to each of his guests a pair of gloves, stuffed full with golden ducats. Grolier's library was scattered at his death, but specimens of his books are still extant in various collections, and are valued at extraordinary prices. A copy of the *Historia Piscium*, by Salvianus, was sold not long since for £30: the book is not rare, and of no intrinsic value; then why did it fetch so much money? The answer is simple: It was a good specimen of Grolier's beautiful binding. The historian De Thou, and the statesman Colbert, succeeded to the mantle of Grolier in their taste for elegant bindings, and brought morocco into general use. They also introduced the very excellent plan of lettering the title of the book on the back of the volume.

The bookbinders of the seventeenth century in England, were far behind those of France. The best bound English books of that period are covered with dark calf-skin, and embellished with thickly studded gold ornaments on the sides and back. Instead of using a press, the sheets were beaten with a heavy mallet on a large stone, to make them lie close and

even: Clement Barkeade, the Cotswold poet, addressing his bookbinder, thus alludes to this practice:

Has my muse made a fault? Friend, I entreat,
Before you bind her up, you will her beat;
Though she's not loose and wanton, I can tell,
Unless you beat her, you'll ne'er bind her well.

The early part of the eighteenth century saw the commencement of the Harleian era. Harley, Earl of Oxford, friend of Pope, and favourite of Queen Anne, was a renowned collector of books. Yet, though he was careful to have his books bound neatly and substantially, they display none of the gorgeous taste which made the old French binders so celebrated. The style of binding which characterised his library was an invariable red morocco, with broad gold bands round the edges, and a star or lozenge in the centre of each side. After the death of Harley, the art again retrograded; what was termed university binding—a sober, gray tinted calf, with bands—coming into fashion. Mr Hollis, however, rather eccentrically deviated from the general style of this period. He employed the celebrated artist Pingo to engrave a number of emblematical devices, such as the cap of liberty, the owl of Minerva, the caduceus of Mercury, the wand of Æsculapius. When patriotism animated the pages, a sprinkling of caps of liberty decorated the covers; when wisdom filled the folio, the owl's majestic gravity indicated the seriousness of the subject; while the caduceus of Mercury fitly emblematised the soaring flight of eloquence, and the wand of Æsculapius testified a treatise on the healing art. These freaks of Mr Hollis would lead us to the thousand-and-one eccentricities of bookbinding, were there not worthier matter to fill the page. Suffice it to say, books on hunting have been bound in deer-skin, and an admirer of Mr Fox had his *History* bound in fox-skin; while in the last century, an action at law between Dr W. Hunter, the celebrated anatomist, and his bookbinder, disclosed the startling fact, that the former had employed the latter to bind a medical work on diseases of the skin in the very human cuticle of which it treated.

The greatest practical improvement in the art of bookbinding, during the eighteenth century, was the introduction of what is technically termed the sawn back. This is merely a groove made with a saw in the back of the sheets, to receive the band to which they are sewn. Thus no unsightly projection appears on the back, such as is seen on all bindings of an earlier date. The bookbinders furiously opposed this innovation; but common-sense, as it always will, soon defeated the prejudices of an interested trade.

It was not till 1766 that the star of English book-binding rose high in the ascendant, through the skill and taste of Roger Payne. This remarkable man first saw the light at Windsor, learned his trade in the classic shades of Eton, and ultimately came to London to push his fortune. There are millions who have never heard of the renowned Roger, but still he was a great man in his way, for all that. Speak to a thorough bibliomaniac of Raphael or Angelo, Canova or Flaxman, Handel or Rossini, and he will irreverently mutter something about daubers of canvas, hewers of marble, or scrapers of catgut; but whisper the magical name of Payne, and his countenance will become radiant with pleasure, and he will exclaim: 'Ah! he was, indeed, an artist!' A thorough connoisseur, on entering a large library, will instantly detect a Roger Payne among a thousand other books. He will take the precious volume from the shelf, as carefully as if he were handling his first-born babe; he will gloat over it, as a miser does over his gold; he will expatiate for hours, if you choose to listen to him, on the beauty and peculiar points of the workmanship; and he will return the book to its place with a sigh as profound as that emitted by the unhappy

Boabdil when he took his last view of the unrivalled Alhambra and his glorious city of Granada.

The light of Payne was not suffered to linger long under a bushel. His great taste in the choice and judicious application of ornament, soon procured him numerous patrons among the noblest and wealthiest of the land. His favourite colour was an olive morocco, which, from some peculiar theory of his own, he always pertinaciously insisted on terming venetian. But his ornaments were the great beauty of his bindings, from their chaste and classical taste, and the correctness of their execution. In renovating and repairing an ancient black-letter tome, his skill was almost miraculous. His *chef-d'œuvre* is a Glasgow Æschylus, in the library of Earl Spencer: the bill for binding this book is still extant, and its amount is above L.16. Several of his bills are carefully treasured in the hands of collectors, and are genuine curiosities, as they minutely describe the work performed, egotistically extol the abilities of the workman, and contemptuously depreciate the 'usual' bad binding of other artists. The private account-book of Roger has also been preserved; and from the following entry of one day's expenditure in it, we may safely conclude that the tide of his affairs, however favourable, did not lead to fortune:—'For bacon, one half-penny. For liquor, one shilling.' Sad to say, his conduct was not equal to his abilities; consequently, instead of rising to the position his talents commanded, he, through vicious indulgence, fell and died in the lowest depth of wretchedness and poverty. But Roger did not live in vain. He not only introduced a new and chaste style, but gave a powerful stimulus to the advancement of his trade. After his time, tasteless and unmeaning ornaments were discarded, and a series of highly finished classical and geometrical designs adopted. We can descend the stream of time no further. It would be invidious to speak of the binders of the present day, or even of those whom they have so worthily succeeded. Nor does the art depend upon individual skill so much as formerly, the mighty appliances of machinery having been called to aid. If the covers have been previously prepared, some of the London binders will bind 1000 volumes, in gilt cloth, in the short space of six hours.

An interesting method of embellishing books, known to the initiated by the technical term illustration, cannot be passed over without notice. To illustrate a book, even imperfectly, is the labour of a lifetime, and requires a large fortune, unwearied diligence, and unconquerable patience. An Edinburgh baillie, who delighted in surrounding himself with works of *virtu*, was one day shewing his art-treasures to the well-known antiquary, the Rev. Andrew Small of Edenshead, when the latter drily said: 'Ay, baillie, there will be a grand rousing here some day.' It is ever the same with private collections of books—to the complexion of the rump, the ebony hammer of the glib-tongued auctioneer, they must come at last. So we may certainly calculate, that some time towards the close of the century there will be great excitement at various sale-rooms where book-buyers most do congregate, and there will be notices in the newspapers of the enormous prices which illustrated copies of Macaulay's *History of England* will then command, for that is the work upon which the illustrators of the present day are most busily employed. To give an idea of such employment, we shall describe the usual process of illustration. As the size of Macaulay's *History* will not admit of large prints, and as folding them, as far as it can be avoided, would be objectionable, two copies of the work must be purchased; each leaf must be taken asunder from its fellows, and carefully inlaid—that is, pasted down on the centres of quarto or folio sized leaves of fine blank paper. A moment's consideration will readily shew why two copies are

required. When page 1 of the first copy is inlaid, page 2 is lost; but its place is supplied on the opposite side of the leaf by inlaying page 2 of the second copy; and so on, alternate leaves from each, until the work is completed. This, however, is merely a preliminary operation; the more arduous part of the task is to come. To illustrate the book, the portrait of every person mentioned in it, whose portrait has ever been engraved, must be procured. Every place, in like manner, must be represented. Battles, medals, trophies, public rejoicings, even imaginary scenes of historical incidents—of everything, in short, alluded to by Mr Macaulay that has been engraved, the engravings must be obtained at any expense, by hook or by crook, *per fas aut nefas*, and inserted in their appropriate place among the inlaid leaves. In about half a page of the first part of his *History*, Mr Macaulay, speaking of the English pulpit of the period, mentions the names of twenty-two church dignitaries, twelve churches, two universities, and two cathedrals. Engravings of each and every one of these, making in all thirty-eight, are absolutely required to illustrate a half-page of the letter-press. Beside these, engravings of parsonage-houses, armorial-bearings, tombs, and even autograph letters, are admissible. So, when at last the four inlaid volumes of the *History* may require to be bound, they will have swelled to upwards of one hundred volumes. Then a magnificent cabinet will be provided for the whole, and the illustrated Macaulay will be as famous in its day as the illustrated Clarendon, the illustrated Pennant's London, the illustrated Bowyer Bible, or other illustrated works, as well known to book-amateurs as St Paul's Cathedral or Westminster Abbey are at the present time. Illustrators, however, are not popular as a class. They seem to be imbued with the very essence of book-destructiveness. Thousands of fine old volumes, to the disgust and disappointment of numberless readers, have been stripped of their engravings, to supply the insatiable demand of one man. Dr Feriari, not too severely, thus satirises the illustrator:

He pastes, from injured volumes snipt away,
His English heads, in chronicled array.
Torn from their destined page—unworthy meed
Of knightly counsel and heroic deed.
Indignant readers seek the image fled,
And curse the busy fool who wants a head.

THE MYSTERIOUS SALUTE.

As I sat in the ladies' room at the Peterborough station, waiting the arrival of the London train, two ladies came in together, whose appearance, though not exactly uncommon, caught my eye. They were nice-looking, and a certain number of years ago must have been pretty. They were not dressed alike, but there was a pervading tone about them alike in both. The large collar, whose antique shape and rich work proclaimed a reverence for the taste of past days; the cool white stockings and sandal-less prunella shoes; the dresses, not too long, of a prevailing gray colour; the brown crape-shawl of the one, and the small white turn-over of the other lady; the Tuscan straw-bonnets, with their primrose and white trimmings, and the black and green veils appended to each; together with the long-shafted parasols without fringe, and the neat little baskets they carried—made it evident that these were what are called 'old maids.'

'Caroline,' said one of them, who appeared the younger of the two, 'we are in capital time. I really begin to think it is less dreadful than we imagined; and if we can only get a nice carriage entirely to ourselves'—

'Ah!' replied Miss Caroline, who acted rather in the character of chaperone to her younger friend—

'ah! there is nothing like being in good time. Better wait an hour, Clementina, than be late one minute. I feel quite glad to have brought my knitting; indeed, I never go anywhere without it; and now, that I cannot see very well without glasses, reading is out of the question. You have Dr Gregory's *Letters* there, I see. How different the literary productions of the present day are! Really, the trash young people read now is terrible, when I think how we were brought up. But I wish Harriet Spyker would come. I begin to think we ought to take our places.'

Very soon after this, I saw another little lady, apparently about their own standing, bustling about, turning round, looking into corners, behind doors, and into all sorts of impossible places, till suddenly she espied the two friends, and walking briskly up to them, began to talk very fast, answering the inquiries of both ladies in a tone so headlong, and with a manner so lively, that I could hardly refrain from smiling both with pleasure and surprise. This last lady was dressed in a dark-coloured satin gown, with no stiffening or crinoline to lift its clinging folds from her short slight person. She wore a small black lace-shawl, and a white bonnet adorned with an immense purple 'ugly,' as they are too truly called.

'How many seats are in these carriages?' asked the new-comer, after mutual greetings had passed.

'I really do not know,' said Miss Clementina. 'I never travelled but once before in a train, and I cannot say I remember. But, you know, we could easily ask.' So saying, she went leisurely up to a very active, busy official, who was greasing the wheels of the carriages, and said:

'Pray, my good man, can you tell me how many seats there are, and what time we start? Where is the station-clock? Ah! I see; it is quite wrong by my watch, which never either gains or loses.' Then, seeing he paid no sort of attention to her, nor indeed heard her, she remarked: 'It is very badly arranged that there is no information to be had, or any one to refer to at these places.'

'All right, ma'am!' said the man, slamming down the iron lid with great noise, and moving off sharply to another wheel.

'How very rude those men are!' said Miss Caroline, in a condoling voice. 'It is better to manage entirely for ourselves, my dear, than to be exposed to such insults.'

'Ah!' rejoined Miss Clementina, 'how different from the old stage-coach days, when one knew there were four seats inside which any ladies might have for the asking, and when a scream or a handkerchief from the windows would arrest instant attention from the gentlemen.'

'Gentlemen!' exclaimed Miss Caroline. 'One cannot now-a-days tell a gentleman from a grazier or a shop-boy—by the dress, at least; and the young men of the present time are so excessively satirical, and so devoid of that deferential respect, without which, a few years ago, a gentleman would have been shut out from ladies' society altogether.'

'It is so, indeed,' said Miss Spyker briskly; 'and I declare to you, nothing would induce me to travel in the same carriage with one of those fast young men—nothing you could name to me, Caroline.'

Here all three agreed that nothing in the whole world would induce them to do such a thing.

The crowd of passengers now began to thicken, and I therefore took up my book and satchel, and soon established myself comfortably in the far corner of a first-class carriage. I had not been there very long when I saw the three friends approaching—the two first ladies arm in arm, and brisk little Miss Spyker peering into first one carriage, then into another, with a face of great anxiety; at length they stood still before the one I had chosen.

'It is pretty well away from the engine, Caroline,' said Miss Spyker in an encouraging tone of voice.

'And not too near the end of the train either,' said Miss Clementina. 'I think we might venture.'

At this moment, a maid-servant, who followed them, put into the carriage an infinite variety of brown-paper parcels, of every shape and size. A small 'tiger' also came up, armed with three umbrellas, and hung round with bonnet-boxes like a 'bird-cage man,' which he deposited as he best could within. The three ladies then took their seats.

'Thomas,' said Miss Clementina, 'have you seen the luggage safe?'

'Yes, 'um,' said Thomas grinning, and pulling a lock of hair.

'And the two carpet-bags?' said Miss Caroline.

'And the baskets of fruit for Lady M'Gregor?' put in Clementina.

'Two baskets of fruit and the flowers is under this seat, 'um,' said Thomas, holding up the valance of the seat. 'Guard said they'd squash 'em in the van along with heavy luggage.'

'Oh, very well. And, Thomas,' said Miss Caroline, 'don't forget what I said to you about the garden, now: water those two square beds—weed the one on the lawn; and let me find the gravel-walks clean when we return.'

'And mind that we don't find half the roots dug up for weeds, and the rest washed bare, from using that large watering-can. That will do, Jane,' added Miss Clementina to the maid: 'you may go now.'

They now began to arrange their bonnets, settle their parcels, and make foot-stools of sundry little boxes they had brought with them. After a short pause, Miss Caroline said: 'Don't like this at all—it is so very dark.'

'What will it be in the tunnels?' said Miss Clementina in an unhappy voice.

'Caroline,' said Miss Spyker, 'I don't know what you will think of me, but I confess to you'—Here she dropped her voice, and I only heard the words 'gentleman in the carriage'; but I saw Miss Caroline and Miss Clementina bridle up and draw back, throwing suspicious glances at poor Miss Spyker, who seemed in an embarrassed minority.

Presently Clementina recommenced the conversation. 'I don't in the least know,' said she, 'how we go off, but I begin to feel rather poorly—the engine makes such a terrible noise—one never could be heard screaming.'

'No,' said Miss Spyker; 'and I believe the guards are most inhuman. If you are ever so frightened, or faint, it's of no use: you are locked in, and no more thought of until you reach your journey's end; and then, if you don't hear the name of the place, you pass on, of course, for nobody asks you to get out.'

'And we,' said Miss Clementina, who began to be very nervous, 'shall never know where to stop. How should we? No one can make out what the people say when they call out the names of the stations, and I am sure we shall miss seeing it written up.'

'I wish anybody we knew very well—of course, if a gentleman, one of a proper and steady age—was coming the same way,' murmured Miss Caroline, descending a little from the exalted position she had previously taken up with regard to Miss Spyker's hinted proposal. 'It is in such cases as these only that one feels quite helpless. O how I wish we were safe at home!'

At this moment an agitated little scream broke from the lips of Miss Spyker.

'What is it? What's the matter? Is it going off?' exclaimed Miss Clementina.

'I think—I really do think that is Mr Smith,' said Miss Spyker, in a nervous manner, looking out of the window as she spoke.

'It certainly is,' said Caroline; 'and, depend upon

it, he is going by this train, and there is his servant behind with his carpet-bag. Do you think it would be improper to ask him to come in?'

'Oh!' exclaimed Miss Clementina, hoping all the same to be overruled by the other two, 'I am afraid it would be so very forward, and putting ourselves in his way.'

'But,' suggested Miss Spyker briskly, 'if we were to give him the further seat there, all would be filled except one, and with our shawls and umbrellas we might make up a figure in the middle seat opposite Clementina; or else, you see, with two vacant places, we should be so very likely to have intruders. Shall we ask him in, Caroline?'

'O dear,' said Miss Caroline, 'I don't know what to do: what do you think?'

'I really do not see that in such an emergency it would be improper,' remarked Clementina, in a tone vainly endeavouring to seem neutral.

'And I declare,' said little Miss Spyker hurriedly, 'I see two other gentlemen lingering here, close by. Don't you really think we might?—he is so very highly respectable—such a thorough gentleman, and not of the new school.'

'Well, if you dare call out, Harriet.'

'You both really think I may, then?'

'Yes,' said Miss Caroline, 'we do.'

'Then make haste,' faltered Miss Clementina. And what with poking and urging from her friends, and her own fears, with a dread of being too late, Miss Spyker put her head out of the window, and said, in a voice that slightly wavered between anxiety and her sense of the impropriety of the act: 'Mr—Sm-i-ith, Mr Sm-i-ith.' I glanced at the three ladies, and saw they were trembling with the combined emotions of hope, fear, and dread of doing anything bordering on the improper, when the door opened, and Mr Smith appeared.

He was a decidedly elderly gentleman, and wore a gray hat, an ample frockcoat of dark blue, white unmentionables and waistcoat; and an eyeglass in an embossed gold frame hung by a black ribbon from his neck. His face wore an expression of great suavity and benevolence towards the world in general; not remarkable for much talent or mental quickness, but rather indicative of a nature at once bland and obtuse. He raised his hat and bowed as he recognised Miss Spyker, which courtesy was acknowledged by all three in the court-minut style. Miss Spyker, however, went straight to the point at once, by saying: 'Very well, thank you, sir; and, Mr Smith, are you going by this train?'

'Madam,' he replied, 'I contemplate doing so. Can I—can I be so happy as to be of use to any of you ladies?'

'Oh, Mr Smith!' said little Miss Spyker, gaining courage from her success, 'would you take one of the vacant seats here? We are so—so—so very much'—

'Frightened,' put in Miss Caroline, emerging from her fauteuil.

'Very much frightened, indeed,' earnestly repeated Miss Clementina.

'With the greatest pleasure, ladies. You honour me too much. I may have the happiness to be of service to you, perhaps. Allow me, Miss Caroline,' said Mr Smith, calling up the tone and air of one not unused to being what is called 'a lady's man,' as he raised from the floor of the carriage Miss Caroline's knitting, which, in the extremity of her indecision, had fallen to the ground; and stepping in, he was motioned to the furthest compartment near my own window. He was very polite and courteous; but, from the moment of his getting into the carriage, I observed a feeling creeping over the minds of the three maiden ladies, that their terrors had induced them to take a rather desperate and extreme step.

They spoke much in low tones together, and replied distantly, and with a sort of bridling up of the figure when Mr Smith spoke—each appearing to feel it due to the others and to herself, to avoid as much as possible giving any opening for speeches even of common civility, and to treat the poor gentleman much after the fashion of a large house-dog, which it might be dangerous to encourage in any playful gambols, lest it should be difficult in the end to keep him within bounds. Their chief anxiety now appeared to be to fill up the remaining seat in the middle of the carriage, so as to make it look to a casual observer as if it too was occupied. There seemed, indeed, every reason to suppose the plan would succeed. Several people had looked in, as if in search of a seat, and retired under the impression that the carriage was full. The engine was apparently getting under-way, and the platform comparatively empty, when, as they were dressing up this spare fauteuil, the whistle rang shrieking through the station, and they all suddenly collapsed in the most direful state of fright.

'Good—ness me! how shocking!' gasped poor Clementina, whose small experience of railways made everything a source of constant terror and surprise. Miss Caroline sank back prostrated; and little Miss Spyker, with both hands to her ears, rocked herself to and fro in a state of suffering and dismay, talking loud and fast all the time. But at this juncture, every other feeling was lost in astonishment, when a porter looked in, hastily glanced round, detected the transparent *ruse de guerre* of the 'dummy' in the middle seat, and flung the door open, exclaiming:

'Room here, sir—just in time—I'll put your luggage in, sir—all right.' And in there sprang a tall, handsome, bewhiskered and moustached young Guardsman, apparently in the extremity of 'saving the train,' and in a great state of excitement, caused by the uncertainty of the last few moments. Here was a pretty business! The feelings of the three ladies for a moment overpowered them, and they sat in silence, fixing looks of blank dismay on each other. Things were unfortunately managed, certainly. In their anxiety to keep Mr Smith at a respectful distance, they had so contrived that now the young Guardsman filled up their cherished vacancy. He was in the very midst of them: Miss Caroline on his right hand, and Miss Clementina and Miss Spyker immediately opposite. The involuntary shrinking into the depths of the carriage, the glances eloquent of feeling, were the first signs of their returning powers of mind. Miss Spyker pulled her blue 'ugly' more completely over her brow, and all three began to look out of the window with determined curiosity at the two bare brown banks of earth which now rose on either side above the train. I really felt for poor Clementina, who appeared to be growing quite giddy from the sameness of the view and the speed with which we passed along. At length she resolutely shut her eyes, as if, inside and out, nothing but objects of distraction met her sight.

We had not been on the move more than a few minutes, when I observed the young Guardsman looking at his fair fellow-travellers with an expression by no means consonant with the air of imperturbable gravity through which it shone. I saw he tried to catch the eye of the quiet gentlewoman in the corner, but I resolutely looked out of the window, though not, I fear, before he detected the shadow of a smile at the corner of my lip.

Mr Smith, glancing over the top of the newspaper which in self-defence he had unfolded, saw, despite his obtuseness, that something was amiss: the distressed looks of the three maiden-friends shewed their mental perturbation; and not knowing exactly what to do under the circumstances, he began, half-absently, to survey the dress and general appearance of the new-comer from the boots upwards, with an eye from

which he strove to banish its usual benign expression. He appeared, however, very much taken aback on perceiving, when he had gradually arrived at the face of the young officer, that his eye was fixed upon him with a meaning he could not quite make out; and he was betrayed involuntarily into saying: 'Did you address me, sir?'

'O dear, no, sir—not at all,' said the Guardsman with a smile.

At the sound of the gruff voices of the gentlemen, the three friends whisked round, with difficulty suppressing their emotion. Miss Clementina, who was the most nervous, began to tremble violently, and turned still paler than she was by nature. Evidently, the least they anticipated was the preliminaries of a duel.

'Will you exchange papers, sir?' said the Guardsman; at which Mr Smith bowed, and waved his paper in the air with a nervous flourish, which sent the corner of it nearly into the open mouth of the stricken Caroline, whose features were in an unnatural state of extension from the incidents of the last few moments. Both gentlemen then subsiding into silence, the ladies began to grow calm, the dreaded *vis-à-vis* offering no further cause for fear, and becoming apparently very passive and harmless over his paper. In the course of time they ventured to get up a little slow formal conversation with Mr Smith, whom, with a natural revulsion of feeling, they seemed to regard more benignantly than ever, looking upon him now in the light of a safeguard.

'Beautiful weather for the country,' faltered Miss Spyker, always the most alert of the three.

'Superb indeed,' replied Mr Smith blandly.

'Dreadful mode of travelling this,' ventured Miss Clementina. 'Ah! Mr Smith, how different from the stage-coach days we remember! One could see the country then.'

'I remember our drive from London to Ascot,' said Mr Smith, in the voice of one calling up, not unmoved, some thrilling memory of the past—'when the speed at which we are now going would have seemed slow to the pace we drove that day. It might,' he went on in a lower tone, glancing at Miss Clementina as he spoke—'it might have been the *society*—it might have been the scenery.'

Miss Clementina here grew very rosy, and said: 'She thought the more entirely such recollections were considered as *past*, the better.' Miss Spyker came to the rescue.

'Mr Smith, have you a Bradshaw?'

'I am sorry to say I have not, madam; but perhaps my memory may serve your purpose. I have travelled on this line often—though not,' he added with a bow, 'under circumstances equally agreeable.'

Here again came a little bridling, and an involuntary glance of meaning at each other.

'Can you tell me the name of the station you want, Miss Spyker?' resumed Mr Smith more gravely.

'I only wanted to know whereabouts the tunnels are?' she replied, apparently impressed with a conviction that they were marked in the publication she had asked for.

'I am sorry to say there are three tunnels very near each other,' said Mr Smith, with the air of one who desires to make the best of unpleasing intelligence; 'but they are only a few minutes long—it is soon over; and I think,' added he, looking out of the window, and very suddenly looking in again, 'we are now on the point of—'

At this juncture the whistle sounded; I hastily drew up my window, and the young Guardsman drew up the further one. The sudden change from light to darkness made the faint glimmer of the lamp—which seemed to be disarranged at any rate—invisible; and a moment of breathless silence ensued, for the rushing noise of the train was deadened by the closed windows. It was at

this instant that a loud chirping sound within the carriage was heard, as of some one bestowing a hearty and unrepelled salute! Who can paint the consternation of the three ladies, as we emerged blinded, dazzled, bewildered, from the tunnel?

It was evident each, bridling up with virtuous indignation, regarded the others as concerned in the guilt; but if any one excited more suspicion than another, it certainly was Miss Clementina. Her near neighbourhood to Mr Smith, his tender allusion to bygone days, and the fact that her bonnet was in a state of derangement the most unbecoming, all contributed to this impression. She, poor soul, feeling her perfect innocence, looked first at her friend Caroline, who with a confused and scared aspect sat bolt upright before her. She, very unfortunately, had for her neighbour the Guardsman; but he appeared sleepily unconscious of what was passing. Nor did Miss Spyker escape—her bonnet and ‘ugly’ were decidedly not *comme il faut*—for, in her anxiety to shut her eyes and stop her ears, she had given an involuntary jerk to the ugly, thereby imparting a wildness to her general appearance, which was considerably heightened by her manner.

But if each lady regarded the others thus, their feelings could not amount to more than suspicion. But Mr Smith! that he was guilty was only too evident, if only from his embarrassment; while the quiet young officer, who for some time past had apparently been slumbering, never attracted their suspicions for a moment.

They were still fluttered by the strange incident, when we plunged into another tunnel; and again the same chirping sound was heard—in fact, an unmistakable kiss—louder and more hearty than before; and we shot into daylight once more in a state of agitation more terrible than ever.

That Mr Smith had the daring impertinence to salute one of the three ladies whom he was bound by every sentiment of honour to protect, admitted no doubt; and indeed that gentleman himself seemed to feel his culpability, for he evidently shrank under the indignant eyes of his fair neighbours, and seemed perfectly paralysed in mind and body. The paper had fallen on his knee, his hat was awry; every particle of expression had vanished from his face, and his hands hung powerless by his sides.

The slackening of our pace now shewed that we were close to some station. The train stopped a moment, and an unearthly cry from the officials without announced the name of the place, which to this day I have never ascertained; and the young Guardsman, having probably reached his destination, clapped his handkerchief suddenly to his flushed face, sprang from the carriage, and was out of sight in a moment.

During the rest of the journey, not a word was spoken. Miss Caroline tried to knit, but signally failed, to the great damage of her work; Miss Spyker pursed up her mouth, and looked out of the window; while Clementina was absorbed in Dr Gregory's *Letters*, holding the volume, as I observed, upside down. Mr Smith was speechless, and remained like one under the influence of mesmerism for many miles.

By and by, I found that I was very near the end of my own journey; I began therefore to collect my wrappings, when I heard Miss Caroline and Miss Clementina whispering to the effect that ‘if’—and they nodded in my direction—‘got out, they dared not stay alone with Mr Smith after what had happened.’ At this moment, he too observed that we approached the Barnet station; and when the train stopped, whether he really had originally intended to get out there, or was now going to wait for the next train in self-defence, I cannot tell; but he was in such haste to have the door opened, that I was quite afraid he was about to

break the railway laws, and get himself into custody for leaping upon the platform while the train was still in motion. He, however, turned round respectfully and timidly, but with the look of an injured man, and raised his hat in token of farewell, which courtesy was received in the most chilling manner by the three ladies, who immediately looked another way.

I then got out myself, and watching the train as it moved out of sight, I saw Mr Smith and his servant, who appeared mutually surprised at finding themselves there—the man's countenance seeming to express: ‘Do you think, sir, you're perfectly in your right senses, getting out at this here place, where you know nobody, and have nothing to do?’ When I turned away, and got up into the town, I saw the Guardsman talking to some friends; he was laughing violently, and, as I passed, kissed the back of his hand with a smack that reminded me of the mysterious sound in the railway-carriage.

NATURE'S MIMICRIES.*

THE self-imitativeness of nature was a favourite subject of speculation with the philosophers of the seventeenth century. By the wisest of them, the wildest exaggerations and most palpable impostures were greedily devoured. A wonderful hen, with a nose, mouth, chin, forehead, eyes, whiskers, and moustaches, perfectly resembling the ‘human face divine;’ an equally wonderful turnip, similarly fashioned, and ornamented besides with a crown of foliage; a radish with the ruffled wrist, thumb, and fingers of a man; a pig with the face of a woman; a willow which resembled a crosier; an ambitious polypodium, aping the figure of the ‘bird of Jove’—these, and a thousand marvels such as these, divided, with the discoveries of Newton and Leibnitz, the attention of the greatest of their contemporaries. The Philosophical Transactions of Britain, the Collectanea of the Academia Naturæ Medico-Physica of Germany, are full of such ‘lying wonders.’ But the strange mania had its day: it died, as all such manias die, of exaggeration; and to our own days was left the task of regarding in their true light these singular displays of the mimic faculty, not the least curious of the many curious freaks of which nature is so prodigal.

‘No person,’ remarks one to whom nature in all her aspects seems to have been wonderfully familiar—‘no person who has been much amid mountain scenery, particularly in rocky districts, can have failed to remark the striking imitations of the human form, or of some of its members, which, by their uncommon aspect, thrust themselves into notice. It may be a giant hand which protrudes in a broad welcome from the rough crag, or a headless trunk, or a mutilated face with wild and savage features; or the scenery will picture out a fortified town with massive walls—turrets, spires, and monumental columns looming in the distance; or great animals, of colossal magnitude and uncouth form, will appear scattered about the sentinels of the dreary fortress.’ In such curiosities, Sark, amongst the Channel Islands, and Skye, amongst the Western Islands, are peculiarly rich. Dr Macculloch, whom few will suspect of poetical exaggeration, tells us, in his tour among the Hebrides, that at the extremity of the point of Aird in the latter island, there is a most striking imitation of a bust. ‘No aid from the imagination,’ he says, ‘is wanting to see a very perfect bust in profile, executed in a very grand and pure antique manner, and occupying the whole face of the cliff, which is here at least sixty feet high. The style is that of a river-god; and adding the grandeur of the

* In No. 139, *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal*, there was a paper on this subject, but confined to ‘Vegetable Mimicries.’

design to the magnitude of the object, and to its position as rising out of the sea, the effect, instead of being ludicrous, is really fine.' A very curious double coincidence is still, we believe, to be seen on the Calton Hill at Edinburgh. Immediately beneath the monument to Nelson is a deep precipice, which, when viewed laterally from a little distance, presents a profile well proportioned, and singularly clear in its outline, which bears a tolerable resemblance to the immortal hero himself. Opposite the Calton Hill to the south, Arthur's Seat, when viewed from a favourable position either in the east or west, bears a very remarkable resemblance to a couchant lion, watching in grim repose over the city beneath. A strange-looking mass of stone on the roadside, about twelve miles from Carnarvon, bears so remarkable a likeness to the younger Pitt, that it has received from the country people the name of 'Pitt's Head.' The nose particularly, we are told, resembles Pitt's nose, and traces of other features are discernible in the eyes, eyebrows, and general form of the head. In the Black Forest, according to Zeiler, there is a rock so like a monk shrouded in his cowl, that the resemblance is recognisable at a glance by every traveller. A similar rock in the island of Malta is known as Il Fratre Imprecato, because it accurately resembles a friar hanging by the neck—so, at least, says the Jesuit Athanasius Kircher. Lively representations of sheep, camels, horses, and other animals were pointed out by the peasants to the missionaries Huc and Gabet on different rocks in the western parts of Tataria. Every one has heard of the mountain in New Hampshire, in the United States, called the Profile Mountain. It forms one of a range known as the White Mountains, and, being about 1000 feet in height, is a conspicuous object from the road between Plymouth and Jamaica. The Profile Mountain has been thus described: 'The side upon which the profile is visible is precipitous; the other is wooded, and rises with a gentle ascent: the rock is of brown granite. At the upper part of the precipitous side, the outline of the human countenance is very remarkable: it is that of an Ethiop, and possesses a low hanging brow, a deep-set eye, a flat nose, and a prominent mouth. The chin is also clearly defined, and rests upon a large bank of debris forming the lower half of the mountain, in some measure corresponding to the chest of the colossal being.'

Man has imitated the works of nature in 'portions of the orders of architecture,' 'and in an infinity of the decorations, utensils, weapons, &c., of all ages.' It is no less true that there are some of the works of man, especially in the department of architecture, which have, so to speak, their mimics in nature. In the district of Sleat, on the east coast of the Isle of Skye, between the house of Tormore and Sleat Point, a natural arch festooned with sea-weeds springs from the seething billows to astonish the beholder with its majestic proportions, and to recur again and again in after-years to his recollection with peculiar vividness.* On the north-east coast of the same island, long series of colonnades are formed by combinations of natural pillars, with wonderful effects. Macculloch mentions one of these clusters as commencing below sea-mark, and being surmounted by pillars in diminishing numbers to the height of 200 feet, until the mass forms a splendid pyramid of super-imposed columns, presenting, in particular positions, its narrow edge against the sky, and looking as if the architect had suddenly stopped in the execution of some portico or colonnade of gigantic dimensions. Another cluster reminded him of the famous temple of the Sibyl. Staffa, however, presents a still nobler analogue of Grecian architecture. Of this island, the wonder and

delight of tourists, it has been said, that 'were the temple of nature a material existence on earth, Staffa would be its site.' The famous pinnacle of the Pote Storr, 160 feet high, is a well-known imitation of a Gothic steeple; and all the appearance of a Gothic building, with a number of arches, is presented in that strange mass of rock, called the 'Souffleur,' in the island of Mauritius, which, projecting far into the sea, has been undermined in every direction by the heavy swell of the Indian Ocean.

Trap rocks often form themselves into long mural lines, resemblances of turrets and ruined strongholds, all so artificial in appearance, as, when viewed from a little distance, to require some effort of the mind to reject the supposition that they are the works of the hands of men. Sandstone rocks, also, are occasionally found as regularly laid block by block, and divided into as regular divisions, as they could be were they the work of the mason. Some rocks of a heterogeneous composition become, on exposure to the weather, unequally affected by it, the softer portions being worn away, while the hard parts stand out in relief. The effect of this circumstance is sometimes curiously picturesque; all sorts of grotesque designs become depicted upon the face of the rocks, many of which equal, as well as imitate, the highest art of the engraver. Of these natural etchings, Roslin Castle furnishes some exceedingly striking and beautiful illustrations; and Macculloch, in the work so often quoted, asserts that he has seen the face of a cliff so ornamented by the pencil of nature, that it had all the appearance of a work of art.

Who that has visited a spar or stalactitic cave, can ever forget the architectural ornaments of exquisite sculpture so lavishly displayed upon its walls? Even the most delicate and difficult works of man's taste find there an imitation in nature. A natural cascade of alabaster flowing into an alabaster lake, and a richly fretted Gothic roof, with elegant pendent corbels, characterise the Franconian cavern known as Forster's Höhle. The grotto of Antiparos was vulgarly believed to be the residence of an enormous giant, who was eternally seated at its mouth. 'The myth,' says a writer already quoted, 'took its rise from the fact of a monstrous concretion, somewhat resembling the human form, occupying the entrance of the cave. After passing the grim figure, the wonders of his palace unfold themselves: exquisite ornaments are seen covering the walls and decking the roof; while a little beyond, the stalactites have assumed the shapes of trees and shrubs, comparable, without hyperbole, as Magni relates, to a petrified grove, some of the trees being white, some green, and all receding in the perspective.' Not less interesting than its classic rival of Antiparos is the well known spar-cave of Strathaird, in the Isle of Skye. Ornaments of beautiful filigree-work and lace-work, and gorgeous pendants here drop from the ceiling, which, in the delicacy of their execution, and in the purity of their taste, may well bear comparison with the most exquisite productions of human art.

Mr Disraeli, in his *Curiosities of Literature*, has a short essay on cameos, which contains several curious instances of the self-imitativeness of nature. 'I have seen a large collection' [of cameos], he says, 'many certainly untouched by art. One stone appears like a perfect cameo of a Minerva's head; another shews an old man's head, beautiful as if the hand of Raphael had designed it.' Some stones which are translucent are, according to the same authority, occasionally veined in a manner so as to produce the portrait—the deeper coloured veins penetrating the substance, and thereby manifesting the impossibility of the likeness having been produced by art. Pliny relates that King Pyrrhus possessed a gem 'wherein was a vein representing Apollo playing on his harp in the middle of

* Macculloch does not mention this arch, which was frequently visited by the writer in the autumn of 1837.

the choir of the Nine Muses—an assertion which Mardebanus corroborates in the following doggel:—

Pyrhus his ring an agate had so fine
It held engraven all the Muses nine;
Apollo standing in the tuneful choir,
And sweetly touching his melodious lyre.

Pancirolli tells us that he had a similar gem which displayed deep under its glossy surface a lamb with a cross over its shoulder. We have the authority of Disraeli for stating that there is in the British Museum a black stone upon which is traced, and by no human hand, a most striking portrait of the poet Chaucer—a stone which is rivalled by the famous agate preserved at Pisa, which contains the image of St Antony in the desert, seated by the brink of a stream, and holding in his hand a little bell. Some of our readers will probably remember the Chinese Collection exhibited in London in 1848. Amongst other curiosities of great value contained in that interesting collection, were several very remarkable specimens of marble, 'some of which,' we are told, 'were framed as curiosities for a Chinaman's museum, and represented landscapes with the detail of river, hill, shrub, and tree; on earth, two or three monsters opening their mouths and looking up; and in air, a unique description of bird making a horrid attempt at flying.' That these grotesque developments were wholly natural is not impossible; but we confess to entertaining grave doubts as to their genuineness, when we remember how much our skilful Celestial friends delight in the monstrous.

Before quitting this part of our subject, we will quote, from a recent number of *Fraser's Magazine*, an instance of the credulity which the philosophers of the seventeenth century evinced in all matters relating to coincidences of form. 'A Dr Tuder,' says the author, 'writing in 1670, very gravely informs us that the island of Malta abounds with stones imitating the eyes and tongue of a serpent; others resembling the liver, heart, spleen, and ribs. A little examination of the paper, and of the engraving which accompanies it, reveals the truth to be that these wonderful productions were simply fossil remains! The viper's tongue is the fossilised tooth of some carnivorous animal. Malta! vipers! how were these wonderful objects to be accounted for? The association of ideas supplied the answer. These were relics left as a perpetual memorial of the viper which the great apostle of the Gentiles shook from his hand into the fire!'

It would be easy to enumerate many mineral substances which have received their names from the resemblance they bear to different objects in nature; such, for example, are the gooseberry-garnet, the asparagus-stone, the cinnamon-stone, the liver-ore, the blood-stone, the ice-spar, the satin-spar. A variety of tin, in whose brown and yellow layers the Cornish miner detects a likeness to the toad's eye, bears that name in commerce. The most delicate wool and the softest cotton and silk have their analogues in several ores and in some beautiful zeolites. The variety of antimony known as the plumose has much the appearance of feathers; and a certain leaf-stripped shrub has a perfect counterpart in the *Arbor Diana*, or lead-tree, of the school-boy.

Leaving the inorganic kingdom, we shall discover analogies of form not less remarkable in the animal world. Among the feathered tribes there is a beautiful Australian bird called the *Manura superba*, or lyre-tail, which displays in its caudal feathers a wonderfully close imitation of an ancient Greek lyre. The margin of the lyre is formed by two feathers on each side, which are broad, and curve into scrolls at the upper end, while a number of thin, delicate, wire-like ones represent the strings. 'This unhappy bird finds the truth, that extraordinary beauty is one of the most

dangerous possessions, fully confirmed: for the sake of its tail, it is shot and hunted down without mercy, and will very probably soon be extirpated. The tails are sold at Sydney for from twenty to thirty shillings the pair.' A denizen of the Canadian forests, which Mrs Jameson mentions in her tour as frequently thrusting itself on her notice, is called the Soldier of the Woods from the military cut of its scarlet bravery. Besides these, a long list of birds might be catalogued as belonging to our subject—some with bills resembling spoons, others boats, some with ruffs, some with beards, and others with formidable helmed heads. But we refrain, contenting ourselves with a mere reference to the peacock's tail, and the classic fable attached to it, as too self-suggestive an instance to endure expatiation.

Amongst reptiles, we shall note but three species as displaying the analogies of which we are in search. The first we shall mention is the *chlamydosaurus*, or frilled agama-snake, with a ruff like that known as Queen Elizabeth's, which it elevates with becoming prudery when it is excited. Another is the Indian species called the spectacle-snake, from a yellow spot, resembling a pair of spectacles, on the back of its neck. The species is quite harmless. The third and last is the basilisk, whose head, shaped like a mitre, was by our older naturalists depicted as reposing under the undeniable semblance of a kingly crown. A species of adder resembling the basilisk is, from this circumstance, as we may shew on a future occasion, a favourite subject of moralisation with the northern fabulists.

Insects, beyond all other orders of animated creatures, present the most startling instances of coincidence of form; and pre-eminent amongst insects we must place the three tropical genera *locusta*, *mantis*, and *phasma*. Of the mantis or praying insect, we have elsewhere spoken at length.* To the other two orders, the walking-leaf or phyllo-morphous insects belong. 'The limbs of these curious creatures are concealed by lamina of thin tissue, so tinted as to wear the precise aspect of leaves; and the resemblance is heightened by the veins which traverse them, just as in the case of real leaves.' In the *Naturalist's Library*, where some admirable drawings of these insects will be found, some are depicted green, some brown, and some as having fallen into the 'yellow sere'; while, more curious still, some look as if they had been half devoured by insects. In the entomological collection at the British Museum, several beautiful specimens are preserved; and there was lately* to be seen alive in the Botanical Gardens at Edinburgh another, which belonged, if we remember aright, to the species known as the 'myrtle leaf.'

Mr Gosse relates an anecdote of a naturalist at the Cape, who, on one of his excursions, saw at his feet some withered leaves whose tints pleased his eye; and he put forth his hand to take them up. Conceive his astonishment to behold them all take to their legs and run away! He succeeded in seizing one of them, however, and discovered it to be an insect.

To come nearer home. Several varieties of imitative insects are indigenous to Britain, and are the plague of our gardens. Kirby and Spence tell an amusing story of a gardener, who observing, as he thought, a dry twig on a tree, broke it away, and found it a wriggling living caterpillar in his hand. Some species of the *lepidoptera*, and the species known as the *Bombyx quercifolia*, simulate dead leaves, and, clinging to the branches, are wholly undistinguishable from the natural sprays.

Insects in the pupa state were to the older naturalists what the beauties of the court of our latest George were to the skilful and courtly Lawrence. Wonderful

* See *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal*, vol. xi., p. 367.

linners, in truth, were these venerable philosophers, and wonderful are the insect icons they have bequeathed us—human heads in miniature; some with Roman noses, some with features of true Egyptian cast, and one like an old lady in a cap.* Then, in more recent times, we have the *Scarabæus manopus*, or kangaroo-beetle, depicted *coa amore* by Mr Westwood. Half beetle, half kangaroo, with the peculiarly formed hinder-legs of the animal reproduced in miniature in the insect, this singular-looking creature has in its attempted marsupial mimicry an appearance irresistibly grotesque. Then we have the rhinoceros and elephant beetles, the former 'with a process comparable to the tusk' of the formidable brute whence the insect has its name; the ferocious stag-beetle, with its long and antler-like jaws; the strange insects called the 'walking-sticks'; the 'death's-head' hawk-moth, with the effigies of a grinning skull between its shoulders; and many spectre-like insects, 'well calculated to intimidate all assailants by the very frightfulness of their aspect.' But we must pass to another portion of our subject.

There is a pretty little West Indian fish called by the negroes the sand-gootoo, from the habit of hiding itself occasionally in the sand, whose shifts, by no means confined to this operation, prove that in dexterous hands the feat of the bottle-conjuror is no longer a romance. Mr Gosse, in his most interesting volume, *A Naturalist's Sojourn in Jamaica*, gives us the following details of the mode by which nature endeavours to secure the safety of this curious little creature:—'In endeavouring to capture some of these little fishes, a curious habit came to my knowledge. Having in my hand a gauze insect-net, I clapped it over a gootoo beginning to hide itself in the sand. I felt sure that I had it, but my servant could not feel it with his hand through the gauze, as I held the ring tightly down upon the bottom of the shallow water. Presently I saw, emerging from under the edge of the ring, an object that in size, form, and colour looked exactly like a hen's egg. The lad instantly seized it, telling me that it was the fish; and as he held it up, I saw with surprise . . . that it was as tense as a blown bladder; and it was with difficulty that I could force it into a wide-mouthed pickle-bottle of sea-water, for it filled the neck like a cork. The instant, however, it touched the water in the bottle, it resumed its ordinary appearance, and the change of form was like the effect of magic.'

The name of *pesci-preti*, or priest-fish—the *Uranoscopus hemerocatus*, or star-gazer of naturalists—is given to a hideous finned fright which haunts the waters of the Mediterranean. In general figure and contour it resembles the tadpole; and when we add that it has a pair of very malign, unpriestly, glaring eyes, misdirected upwards—a broad gutter of a mouth placed immediately below the orbits—a long vermicular process for inveigling unwary fish—and two sharp spines bristling on the shoulders, the reader will have a tolerable idea of the repulsive exterior of this sanctified *callionymus*. The *Squalus zygena*, or hammer-fish, derives its name from its singular transverse head, at the opposite extremities of which are situated two very salient yellow eyes, which, from their position, command a very extensive range of vision. An enormous pair of fins, which, stretching out from either side of the body, offer a striking resemblance to a pair of wide-spread wings—a detached head terminating in a correct process like a beak—and a large pair of piercing bright eyes, have procured for a member of the skate family the name of the sea-eagle. The *lophius*, or sea-frog, like a gigantic tadpole blown out to the size of a porpoise, with an immense head, and a mouth extending on either side beyond the width

of the body, presents no doubtful prototype of those open-mouthed chimeras, the old bones, spring-devils, befanos, croc-mitaines, bric-à-bracs, &c., which people our national nurseries. To these may be added the sea-horse, the bull-head, the sea-scorpion, the sea-butterfly, the saw-fish, the sun-fish, and the coffin-fish—with which latter nondescript we close our catalogue of fish analogies.

Amongst those *orchidaceæ* of the zoological kingdom, the *testaceæ*, we find many wonderful coincidences of form. A curious variety of shell has received the name of *harpa*, from the transverse bars with which it is marked resembling the strings of a harp. The *porcellaina*, or pig-cowrie, resembles, or is supposed to resemble, a scored pig, and is said to have formed an important ingredient in the manufacture of 'porcelain.' One very pretty shell, the *bullina*, is like a rosebud; another, the *cassidea*, resembles a helmet; a third and fourth, the *struthiolaria* and the *aporrhais*, respectively simulate the foot of an ostrich and the foot of a pelican; a fifth bears no remote similitude to the ear; while a score of others more or less imitate the different kinds of fruit—olives, strawberries, apples, melons, oranges, dates, &c.

Many striking analogies are also found amongst the corals. Some resemble petrified Christmas-puddings; one, the *caryophylla*, 'has the singular aspect of the sprig of a tree, the ends of the branches being tipped with clove buds;' and another, the *Gorgonia flabellum*, or sea-fan, is too often seen in our drawing-rooms to require further notice. The most remarkable of all, however, is the *Meandrina cerebriiformis*, or brain-stone. So nearly does this coral approximate in external form, in its convolutions, and even in its semi-pinkish colour, to the human brain, as to have given rise to many extraordinary speculations amongst visionary naturalists.

In Dr Mantell's work upon geology, there is an excellent representation of that marvel of the early ocean, the 'lily encrinite.' Another of those very extraordinary fossils, the pear-encrinite of the oolitic limestone, bears the appearance of a very diminutive palm-tree. Nor has their ancestral glory altogether departed from the *comatula*, the modern representatives of the fossilised encrinites. Instead of lilies and palms, however, they represent wigs: they are the sea-wigs of our popular literature.

If we cannot be said to have exhausted our subject, we must, at least, have pretty nearly exhausted the reader's patience; we therefore draw to a close, not, however, without recognising, in some of the strange coincidences of form we have been considering, one of those defensible provisions with which the Creator has endowed many of His otherwise most defenceless creatures.

THE LAIRD OF GORDONSTOWN.

FAR down in the stormy north, on the Morayshire coast, and at a part of that coast where huge rocks, 200 feet in perpendicular height, are lashed by the German Ocean, stands the fine old mansion of Gordonstown, now with its lands passed into the possession of the Gordon Cumming family, but one of whose former proprietors, Sir Robert Gordon, and his strange doings, are still the theme of many a wonderful legend. And certainly no man ever better understood the art of profiting by the strong, and it would seem ineradicable, superstition pervading more or less all classes in the north of Scotland. Indeed, we cannot but regret that Sir Robert in his latter days did not, like another Barnum, become his own confessor, and do for superstition what the other did for its parent credulity; for we should then have had stories as simple in their origin, and as incredibly successful in

* These are all to be seen in Goeldart.

the carrying out, as the Feejee mermaid, the woolly horse, or Washington's nurse.

The appearance of the old stately mansion of Gordonstown, a massive frowning pile, is well calculated to strike with awe stronger minds than those of the peasantry of Sir Robert's time; and even in the present day, superstition looks round its shoulder, and lowers its tone, and whispers the mysterious tale with as much zest as if it still loved to be duped, and were not in full possession of the solution of the mystery. Sir Robert had dealings with the Evil One: this was the grand admitted fact, the full faith in which he so effectually encouraged, that none of the people around would venture near the place after nightfall. Some believed that if ever he went beyond the dreaded walls, he had the power of becoming invisible; others said he might have a body, or he might not; if he had, the features were of dire and stern aspect, and his slightest glance brought you under the influence of the evil eye; and if one of the old gates so much as creaked on its hinges, suggesting the possibility that he might be coming forth, the whole neighbourhood took to flight. Those who believed in his bodily presence—as distinguished from others who regarded him as the invisible power that caused strange unearthly noises to be heard, that prevented the grocer's wife's bees from swarming, and laid the beadle's little boy mortally sick of small-pox—were all agreed on one grand distinguishing peculiarity, which was, that he had no shadow; and as to his losing it, the legend runs thus:—Sir Robert, with others of the same class, was in the habit of attending the school of black arts, where it was a perquisite of the devil to keep every year the last that came out of the school-door. On one occasion, Sir Robert happened to be the last, and when his black majesty was about to seize him, he told him to take the one behind him; so he caught hold of Sir Robert's shadow, who thus 'cheated the deil,' but was ever afterwards a shadowless man.

The sun he might shine in the east or the west,
But Sir Robert's wee body nae shadow could cast;
Langsyne had he lost it in far foreign parts,
When he cheated the deil in the school o' black arts.

The house of Gordonstown is in good repair, some of the apartments magnificent. Leaving the modern suite, and descending a little lower on the west end, you come to a landing-place midway down a narrow stone-stair, where one of the flags is movable, and when raised, discloses a place built like a draw-well, where, it is said, a lady was starved to death. On descending another flight, you come to a square subterranean dungeon, where those who had not the good-fortune to please the laird were deposited, and the water let in on them till they were drowned. Near this dungeon was a smith's forge, where agricultural implements were mended, it was believed, by supernatural agency; for these were left by their owners at a certain place outside before dark, and when they returned for them in the morning, they found all mended, and ready for work. The whole of the under-floor of the house is arched over, and there are long dark passages running in all directions, having trap-doors concealed in the walls. In one of these passages you come to a cellar-dorm, long the crowning mystery and horror of the house, for over it was written in large characters the word 'Pestilence;' and it was confidently believed, that whoever should even approach the dreaded door was sure to fall a victim to some dreadful disease. Some declared that they heard low piteous moanings from within at the midnight hour; others saw the ghosts of the victims hurrying to and fro with frantic gestures in the twilight; while all agreed that it was impossible to approach the place with safety, owing to the noisome air from so many dead bodies being heaped together in so small a space.

Having now given the legendary view of so famous a character, we now proceed to the true story of Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonstown, who was the second son of the Earl of Sutherland, and a man of uncommon genius. He was partly educated in Italy, and had travelled much. He was made the first baronet of Nova Scotia in 1625, and was a privy-councillor in Charles I.'s time. In his knowledge of art and science he was far in advance of his age, and hence his reputation as a dealer in the black arts. He was much given to chemical analysis, and is said to have sat seven years over the fire of his forge until he created a salamander, out of which animal he tortured unearthly secrets: but here again we are lapsing into the legendary. The truth is, Sir Robert was a great smuggler, and he encouraged the wildest stories about himself, and made use and profit of the national superstition to keep off dangerous intruders. At the base of the high cliffs already mentioned are some fine bays, in one of which he used to land his contraband goods; and in the rock opposite this bay is the mouth of a subterranean passage which formerly existed extending from the shore to the house; and inside the passage is a two-stalled stable cut out of the solid rock, still called Sir Robert's stable, where he used to put up his horses while doing business with his French or Dutch friends.

He worked himself in the smith's forge, mending the implements of husbandry, and encouraged the belief in supernatural agency by the mystery of the place where they were laid down, the dark hour, and the celerity of the work. Some large coppers he made use of are still in the house, one of unusually great size just as he left it, and the trap-doors are seen to be so arranged in the passages that he might escape at any time if surprised. What we have called the crowning mystery, however, was only a few years ago cleared up; and it does seem almost incredible that nearly 200 years should have passed away—for Sir Robert died in 1656—before the adventure was attempted. At length the last proprietor, whose curiosity overcame his superstition, caused the door to be broken open, and to the mingled amazement and diversion of those who were present were discovered the familiar spirits of the wizard—brandy and gin piled up in rich stores, choice fruits of the smuggling transactions of the facetious laird; and we have heard from persons who have partaken of the precious liquors, amusing stories of the jolly doings which followed the discovery of the treasures.

The people tell of his driving over the loch of Spynie—a loch on the estate—in a coach and four. There was ice on the loch:

But so tender that ice that it maunna be pressed,
For it yields to the wecht o' the waterfowl's breast.
But what cares Sir Robert for the ice or the hour?
He's out on the loch in his chariot an' four;
An' it cracks, an' it rattles, but daurna gang down—
Sic power hath Sir Robert o' Gordonstown!

The safety of the party was to depend on their passing without looking round till they reached the other side, for they were pursued by a legion of witches bent on their destruction. When just about over, the coachman, in his terror, looked round, and down went the hind-wheels, and there the forders stuck, one foot on dry land, and the other in the water. In this perilous situation, they were relieved by a friendly spirit in the shape of a corbie (crow), with the eye of a snake, who put the witches to flight.

But wha is that corbie, wi' Beelzie's ain frown?
'Tis a friend o' Sir Robert o' Gordonstown!

The belief is still rife among the people that Sir Robert never died, but that the devil ran away with

him bodily in the end, he having sold himself to Satan many years before for a consideration. The legend tells of the Evil One coming to claim his own, mounted on a jet-black horse, with two black hounds at his heels; and how he was seen riding off with the body of Sir Robert across his saddle-bow, one hound hanging on his throat and another on his thigh.

THE HARVEST OF THE SEA.

IN TWO PARTS.—CONCLUSION.

THE WHITE AND SHELL FISHERY.

It is only by a series of visits to such a market as that of Billingsgate, or by an inspection of the ledgers of such a salesman as Mr Saunders, late of Thames Street, that we can obtain even an idea of the vast quantity of fish required for the supply of London alone; and as we know that all the towns in the three kingdoms are more or less dependent on the sea for a substantial part of their food-supplies, we may try to sum up the total quantity of nourishment we derive from this prolific source; but after all, even if we were to double or treble the amount, the sum-total we arrive at will be but a shadow of what it might be. The harvest of the sea, with proper implements, and the necessary organisation to gather it, has no limit. Why, one herring alone, says an eminent naturalist, if suffered to multiply unmolested and undiminished for twenty years, would shew a progeny greater in bulk than ten such globes as that we exist upon. Ireland, which has been for so many years the chief difficulty of the British government, abounds with what we may term unwrought mines of fish—gold-pits, which require but to be opened up with vigour to prove a Dorado to the country.

For the better exposition of this branch of our subject, it will be necessary to divide it into three divisions, the first being the cod and haddock fishery.

We must visit Newfoundland, if we have a desire to see the most extensive cod-fishery in the world; but it is to the fisheries of our own country we wish for the present to direct attention. The cod-fish is found in abundance on the shores of Britain and off the coast of Ireland. We have the authority of practical men for stating that the supply is unlimited. Vessels go to great distances to fish for cod and other white fish, which are to be found in every sea but the Mediterranean. In Scotland, the Orkney and Shetland Islands are the principal seats of this fishery; and it is from these islands, and from Stornoway and some other stations, we obtain the greatest quantity of fish. Cod abounds also along the coasts of England, on the celebrated Dogger Bank, the Well Bank, and off the Norfolk and Lincolnshire coasts, where formerly it was not found—very likely from not being sought for. The fish are carried to the London markets from the Orkneys, and other distant fishing-stations, in schooner-vessels containing wells, to keep them alive and fresh. But great quantities of white fish are also forwarded to London and other markets by railway, packed in ice. The total supply drawn from the British seas may be estimated by the fact that 4,000,000 of cod-fish are got from the north alone.

The mode of curing as practised in Scotland differs from that of Newfoundland, and is as follows:—The fish are usually killed and cleaned as soon as taken, which is done by hand-line, with hooks. When brought on shore, they are opened up from head to tail, and a portion of the backbone is cut out. They are then carefully washed and purified from blood with copious libations of clean salt-water. After being drained, which is the next process, they are laid down in a long vat, in alternate rows of fish and salt, heavy weights being placed upon the layers to keep them

under the action of the pickle. After a time, they are taken out of the vat, again washed and brushed, and gathered into little heaps to drain. This being effected, they are spread out individually to 'pine' by exposure to the sun and air. Next they are built into heaps called steeples, to await the appearance of what is technically called the bloom, a whitish substance which comes out on the fish. This completes the business. In Yorkshire, the curers improve on this plan, by placing the fish on wooden erections made of cross-bars, which admits of their drying much sooner, keeps them cleaner, and obviates numerous accidents which occur to those dried on the ground.

Great quantities of haddocks, also, are caught both on the English and Scottish coasts. These fish are either forwarded to market direct in a fresh state, or, as in Scotland, put through a process of cure called smoking, and brought into the market as *Finnans*, in which shape vast supplies of the fish are sent from the northern fishing-villages to the manufacturing towns of England. The mode of capture is by lines similar to those employed in the cod-fishery, and portions are also got by means of the trawl-net. This fish is plentiful, and forms an excellent article of diet. The haddocks of best quality are found in Dublin Bay, and on the Nymph Bank. Plentiful supplies are likewise obtained on the shores of the eastern counties of England. 'The commerce in this description of fish has greatly increased in Scotland,' says a recent writer, 'many having embarked in it on a large scale, by erecting extensive curing-houses, and purchasing haddocks from numerous captors, who confine themselves almost solely to this department of fishing. The whole process, when performed upon the smaller scale, and by the country-people, takes only a few hours; so that fish caught in the evening may be in a market many miles distant on the morning of the following day. The real Finnans are generally small, and of a pleasant pale-yellow colour; but larger fish are cured at the great commercial stations, and in a way intended to admit of their being sent to a longer distance, and keeping for a longer time.' In Edinburgh, it may be mentioned that the price of haddocks and other fish has more than doubled itself within the last few years. Ten years ago, the fishwife would bring the supply to your door a distance of three miles, and sell at the rate of about a fraction more than a half-penny per pound-weight. The advance in price is no doubt attributable to the facilities of carriage afforded by our railways, and the consequent demand of a greatly enlarged field, with which the supply does not keep pace.

We may now devote a few sentences to an account of the capture of flat fish. There is a very great variety of this kind of fish, most of which are eligible to a place on the dining-table. They are mostly taken by means of the trawl-net, which is much used in the English fisheries. The flat fish most esteemed for the table are halibut, turbot, skate, soles, and flounders; plaice, dabs, &c., we may pass without notice. The halibut has been known to attain to enormous size, some having been caught of the weight of 600 pounds. In its flavour, the halibut is little inferior to that of the real turbot, which it so much resembles. At certain seasons, commencing in April, it is plentiful in the Scottish fish-markets, and can be had wonderfully cheap. The aldermanic turbot is said to be the best flavoured of all the flat-fish family. 'It is thought, we are told, to be the rhombus of the ancient Romans. A specimen of enormous size was taken in the reign of Domitian, who ordained a Senatus Consultum to devise the best mode of bringing it to table.' Turbot is obtained principally by trawling, but also by line-fishing. Vast stores of it are found in the silver-pits between the Dogger and Well Banks, where hundreds of vessels may be found profitably

engaged
are also
commen
the Sco
the sam
Holland
north,
line mu
the beg
and off
tive pla
might l
best fis
secure t
coast w
of the g
of five p
the nor
fishing.
misfort
with vi
could b
which
ment to
The
fisherie
for a s
palatab
manner
and has
like the
some se
greatly
consum
amount
weight
idea of
this on
May a
must b
from t
the fis
as ther
differs
herring
years
being
1834,
abunda
March
10,000
fish to
the flu
plentif
price o
each t
recall
the ou
The
herring
sketch
It is p
fish is
English
both b
fish ta
exceed
rate: i
fishing
The pi
many
The h
to fill
one po
of fish
in the

engaged in its capture. Our London and home markets are also largely supplied by the Dutch fisheries, which commence early in the spring-season; and neither the Scottish nor English pursue the fishery with the same success as our enterprising neighbours from Holland. As the year advances, the fish migrate to the north, where deeper water is obtained, and where the line must be resorted to. The fishery terminates about the beginning of autumn. The coasts of Devonshire, and off Dover towards the French side, are all productive places for the taking of these kinds of fish. Soles might be obtained in enormous quantities, were the best fishing-ground selected and some pains taken to secure them. At present, it is mostly from the English coast we derive our supplies. Soles have been caught of the great weight of nine pounds, and very frequently of five pounds' weight. Skate-fishing, much followed in the north, is just similar to the other kinds of trawl-fishing; we have endeavoured to describe; the great misfortune is, that none of the branches are prosecuted with vigour. A large amount of additional capital could be profitably invested in reaping our sea-harvests, which would give useful and remunerative employment to thousands of our population.

The sprat-harvest, and the mackerel and pilchard fisheries, are all of them highly productive, yielding, for a small outlay of capital, immense quantities of palatable food: mackerel are caught in the same manner as herring, only the net is of a larger kind, and has some trifling modifications. This fish is also, like the herring, found in great shoals; and indeed in some seasons the supply has been so large as to exceed greatly the demand. When we state that the average consumption per annum of this fish, in London alone, amounts to nearly 25,000,000—averaging one pound-weight each—our readers will be able to form some idea of the total quantity of food yielded to us from this one species. The flavour of the fish is best in May and June, and, to be eaten in perfection, it must be very fresh; it must, in fact, be 'new drawn from the sea.' Great bustle and activity prevail at the fishing-stations during the mackerel season; but as there are very few of this fish cured, the scene differs from that which is seen at the time of the herring-fishery, especially in Scotland. Particular years are marked in the memory of fishermen as being more productive than others: 1808, 1821, 1833, 1834, and 1847 (we think) are marked years for the abundance of their supplies. One Sunday morning in March 1833, four boats at Hastings caught upwards of 10,000 fish! Sixteen boats have been known to catch fish to the value of nearly £6000. As illustrating the fluctuations of value caused by the scarcity or plentifulness of the article, we may note that the price of mackerel has been known to range from 7s. each to eighty for 1s.—a striking contrast, which will recall Covent Garden stories of green pease at a guinea the ounce, or 1s. a pea!

The pilchard, which is an important member of the herring family, demands a brief notice. Picturesque sketches of the pilchard-fishery have often been written. It is pursued chiefly on the coast of Cornwall, and this fish is taken there, and at various other places on the English coast, from July till October. They are caught both by drift-nets and seine-nets, and the number of fish taken by a drift-boat in a night's fishing varies exceedingly; from 5000 to 10,000 is considered moderate: it often amounts to 20,000. For the season's fishing, about 150,000 fish would be deemed favourable. The pilchard is sometimes incredibly abundant, and as many as 2200 hogsheds have been taken in one night. The hoghead contains about 3000, and fish sufficient to fill 10,000 of these measures have been brought into one port in a single day. Thirty millions of one kind of fish!—a striking example of what the sea can do in the way of contributing to the food of mankind.

The shoals of pilchards are discovered advancing from the rocky cliffs by the dark shadow they produce on the water. Look-outs are stationed to give notice of the route taken by the shoal, and, armed with a branch to use for the purpose of signals, it is in a great measure by their exertions in directing the boats that the shoal is surrounded by the nets, and hauled near the shore; when a new set of boats and men are ready to dig the fish out of the compact mass enclosed in the seine, and carry them ashore to be sold and cured, and in due time exported to the shores of the Mediterranean. The capital employed in gathering this portion of the harvest of the sea is very considerable, having been estimated at £600,000. One of our naturalists says: 'As an object of adventure, the pilchard-fishery is popular in Cornwall; and beyond a doubt, the community is greatly benefited by it. Yet it frequently happens that the success is partial, and the price is low; but when there is a profit, it is commonly considerable, and in this lottery every one is led by the hope of being among the fortunate.'

The sprat, or garvie, is a little fish, about six inches long, and was at one time supposed to be the young of the herring. Although not so valuable as that fish, the unbounded quantities in which it is taken, and the cheap rate at which they are sold, render it an object of decided interest to the poorer classes of the community. Notwithstanding the immense supplies of this fish which can be disposed of in London, it has been so plentiful in some years as to necessitate the sale of large quantities to farmers for manure. 'In the winter of 1829-30, sprats were particularly abundant; barge-loads, containing from 1000 to 1500 bushels, bought at 6d. a bushel, were sent up the Medway as far as Maidstone to manure the hop-grounds.' There has been a great change in the mode of bringing fish to market since 1830; and if we may judge from the account given in a recent description of Billingsgate, of the immense quantities of sprats which are there disposed of and conveyed in the course of an hour or two to the outermost corners of London, we may safely indulge in the hope that it will never again be necessary to dispose of valuable food-stuff as manure for the land.

A word now as to eels. We have a vivid recollection of having at one time guarded with watchful tenderness a large hair plucked from the tail of a stallion, and carefully placed in an earthen vessel among pure spring-water, in the expectation of some fine morning being called upon to hail it as an eel. Indeed, so determined were we on this point, that before submitting to have it thrown away, we actually fancied that, like the tail of the lion on Northumberland House, it moved. This is only one of the many curious ideas which are entertained as to the origin of this serpent-like fish. Another is, that if we cut up two turfs, covered with May-dew, and, laying one on the other, expose them for a time to the heat of the sun, in a few hours there will spring from them an infinite quantity of eels. But no matter how they originate—which is much in the same way as other fish—they form a valuable description of food, the flesh being excellent; and being prolific, the supply is almost unlimited, if sufficient care were only taken to obtain it. It is the Dutch to whom the eel-pie bakers of the great metropolis look for their supplies; and they are brought over in great quantities from Holland to the Thames in welled vessels, where, of course, a ready market is at once obtained for them. Great quantities, however, are caught in this country, and we are told that the supply might be doubled by a little ingenuity in their capture. They are principally dug for at present with eel-forks, and are found imbedded in the soft soil of harbours, and in those river-channels which are occasionally left dry by the tide for a few hours daily. In such places, buried about a foot and a half deep in

the mud, and mostly near to land-drains, or other courses which empty their waters into these rivers, plentiful supplies can be had. It may be mentioned, as an indication of the prolific nature of this fish, that when the young ones are ascending a fresh-water river from the sea, the shoals have been known to pass a given point at the rate of 1600 per minute; and this passage has been known to proceed uninterruptedly for four consecutive days. That would give 1,152,000 eels per day, or a total for the four days and nights of upwards of 9,000,000 of fish on one river alone. No necessity, one would suppose, to be obliged to the Dutch to fill our eel-pies for us. If such be the number ascending the Thames, can any person calculate what is likely to be the total number in the whole of the rivers of Great Britain?

In his interesting publication on *London Labour and the London Poor*, Mr Mayhew gives the following statement of the yearly quantity of shell-fish consumed in London:—Oysters, 495,896,000; lobsters (1 pound each), 1,200,000; crabs (1 pound each), 600,000; shrimps, 498,428,648; whelks, 4,943,200; mussels, 50,400,000; cockles, 67,392,000; periwinkles, 304,000,000. The above statement is a sufficient index as to the demand for the crustacean tribe. And yet how small a portion of the population are enabled to enjoy such a luxury, considering the limited supply and consequent dearth of the article! Many of the inhabitants of London and other large cities have never in their lives tasted fresh fish; and even shrimps are luxuries which the genuine Londoner, in the absence of lobster-salad, and having no chance of a feast of natives, thinks unrivalled.

The oyster, it is well known, is in season only in certain months of the year, commencing in August, and terminating about the end of April. Capital oysters can be had frequently in Edinburgh at the rate of 1s. per hundred. They are of course much dearer in London and in inland towns and cities, where the cost is increased by railway carriage. As the oyster can be removed from one site to another, it is thought that if proper means were adopted, a still more abundant supply of this favourite dainty might be obtained. We understand that beds have been formed for the supply of the great metropolis on various parts of the south coast, as well as at the mouth of the Thames. These, we believe, are worked by companies, and are found to pay. Could some plan like this not be adopted in the north? And would it not be remunerative to send large supplies to the inland towns of the kingdom?

Lobsters have come now to be in such great demand as to lead to their importation from Norway in countless thousands. By some expenditure of capital, the Irish coasts might be made to yield a good return in lobsters. We borrow the following account of their capture from a work on the Irish fisheries:—'They are taken out of the clefts and holes in the rocks with a gaff, which has a small handle made of ash, about five feet long, and two and a half inches in circumference, to the end of which is attached, with a socket, a light piece of iron about eighteen inches long, and as thick as the shank of a tobacco-pipe, with a hook formed at the end of it: fishing for them in deep water, they are caught in a lobster-pot made of long briers worked into a basket of precisely the same shape, and on the same principle as the circular-wire mouse or rat trap. These are used all along the Irish coast; they are baited inside with pieces of fish cut up into small squares, and hung along the inside of the lobster-pot. The English pots are made of four or more hoops, tied, at equal distances, on spars about four feet long; there is a strong netting put over this, with two entrances into it, one at either end. This is thought a much better plan, as it is impossible for anything to get through the netting, and the fish can see the bait

much easier. Immense numbers of lobsters might be obtained on the Irish coasts, and could easily be kept alive in little ponds of salt-water until an opportunity offers of sending them to market.'

We trust that the attention of practical people may be speedily drawn to the prolific food-stores contained in our seas and firths; we are sure it requires only enterprise and management, with a judicious expenditure of capital, to make them available. When we find how eager the mercantile man is to obtain a good investment for his money, and how readily he will risk his thousands on any popular bubble of the day, it is astonishing to think that so practical a subject as the one we have been endeavouring to illustrate should not, long ere this, have received a greater amount of attention. 'The fishermen often see the creeks along the west coast of Ireland crammed with fine fish, when they could take tons of them at a haul or shot with a deep seine or drift net; but, when caught, they would be useless to them, as they could not either salt or sell them. . . . Herrings have had to be sold on the coast of Donegal for tenpence per thousand. . . . There are not hands enough here (Ireland) to take a tithe of the fish that could be had; and even if they were captured, there is no salt to cure them, and the market to sell them is far away, with no means of carriage.' So says Mr Brabazon, a writer on the subject, who is supported by the other authorities whom we have consulted. The field of enterprise which might be opened up in connection with the Irish fisheries, would give employment to thousands of the population, and be a great means of conferring wealth and happiness on that country.

We again repeat the great fact, that in gathering the harvest of the sea, there is wanted only the wages of the labourer and the expense of providing the necessary implements; man incurs no costly outlay for seed, or for the trouble of sowing it; no lavish sums of money have to be expended for the purchase of guano or other manures; there is no holding on for market—no seasons of blight, no failure from disease, no deterioration from the passing storm; all that is wanted is the necessary enterprise and organisation to secure the manifold food advantages which the sea most certainly affords. Steam-transit to most parts of the country can now be found; and in a few hours after it reaches the harbour, the produce of the fishing-boat can be distributed to the most distant corners of the land, and absorbed at once into the commissariat of this populous empire. The present fishing-system, however, is so rude and imperfect, as not to be able to supply more than one-third of the demand; but it is only our want of enterprise, and our deficiencies in the means of capture and cure, that make this limit. Nature has provided in the bosom of the great deep boundless stores of the most luxurious food, and man has but to put forth his hand, and it is his.

THE ARSENIC-EATING QUESTION.

MR BONER's papers on this subject* have attracted the attention—by no means favourable—of the scientific world; and among others, Mr Robert Hunt has most warmly remonstrated, and Dr Thomas Inman of Liverpool has either explained away or denied the facts mentioned by our contributor. These facts, our readers may remember, are chiefly—that there is a practice of eating arsenic in small doses in Styria and other parts of Europe; that the people indulging in the drug believe it produces a blooming complexion, a brilliant eye, and an appearance of embonpoint; that it is dangerous to take it at any other time than the increase of the moon; that the dose, beginning with half a grain, may be increased to several grains; and that symptoms

* See No. 110, page 90.

of poisoning appear when the practice is given up. As for the amount of the dose, Dr Inman remarks, that as it is stated to be procured by the 'Styrian peasantry from hucksters, herbalists, &c.,' the probability is, that it may in reality contain only a moderate percentage of arsenious acid; and on this point—the strength of the dose—and its effect upon the personal appearance, he makes the following statement:—

'The human being will bear a certain very small quantity of arsenic without any marked effect; in an adult the tenth of a grain per day is the limit. After this has been continued about ten days or a fortnight (a time equal to the "increase of the moon"), the body is saturated, and certain symptoms follow, amongst which are "*swelling of the face and a mild inflammation of the eye*"—(the blooming complexion, appearance of embonpoint, and the brilliant eye of the Styrian peasantry!) When this appearance is noticed, the careful physician always suspends the use of the drug; knowing that to continue it will be attended with danger. Without understanding the reason, the peasant does the same, for he suspends arsenic-eating while the moon wanes.

'Experience has shewn that a fortnight only is requisite to discharge arsenic from the body. By leaving, therefore, an interval of some fourteen days between one set of doses and another, the peasant always begins *de novo*. When you consider the stress laid by the Styrians upon a fortnightly suspension of the drug, it is easy to believe that the notion "that the symptoms of poisoning come on when the practice is altogether given up," has no foundation in fact.'

This seems sufficiently satisfactory to persons who, like ourselves, have no pretensions to a knowledge of the subject; but it may be remarked, that a description of the medical use of opium in this country would not be considered a refutation of the extraordinary facts related of the practice of eating that poison in China and Turkey. At the same time, there is doubtless a great difference in the nature of the two substances, the one being more immediately deadly than the other. But when Dr Inman proceeds to say that the notion of the drug strengthening the wind of the chamois-hunter when ascending a height must be quite illusory, *because the quantity he takes is 'too small to have any appreciable effect,'* we demur to the argument. The quantity mentioned by Mr Boner, supposing it to be pure, is declared preposterously great, while if impure, the relative amount of the adulteration is wholly unknown to either party. On the other hand, the necessity supposed by Mr Boner to exist for persisting in the use of the drug after it has been once fairly begun, appears inconsistent with his statement that a fortnight must intervene between each course—during which fortnight, according to Dr Inman, the poison vanishes altogether from the body. The sleekness of the horses to which arsenic has been administered, is accounted for by the medical critic by its being the property of the drug to make the hair fall off; Dr Inman supposing that it is only the long hairs that perish, while there continues a constant growth of young and smaller ones.

'If any of your readers,' concludes Dr Inman, 'still feel disposed to try the effects of arsenic, let me give them the following cautions:—To use only a preparation whose real strength they know; Fowler's solution contains the $\frac{1}{10}$ th of a grain in every drop. Very few, indeed, can bear to take five drops three times in a day. It is best borne on a full stomach. It soon produces griping, sickness, and purging. It is well to remember the Styrian rule, and invariably suspend its use every alternate fortnight. The dose cannot be increased indefinitely or with impunity. When once the full dose which can be borne is ascertained, it is better to begin with that, and go on diminishing it to the end

of the fortnight, than to begin with a small dose, and go on increasing it daily. Lastly, let me urge upon all who adopt the Styrian system, to make some written memorandum that they have done so, lest, in case of accident, some of their friends may be hanged in mistake.'

The use of arsenic as described by Dr Tschudi and Mr Boner is well known in various continental countries, although nobody, perhaps, is aware of the quantity of arsenious acid contained in the dose; and in England the information was widely spread by newspaper paragraphs before we mentioned the subject at all. Since it is impossible, therefore, to conceal the fact of the poison being eaten, the closer investigation the question receives the better. The notion that investigation is dangerous inasmuch as it is 'likely to put the thing in people's heads,' proceeds, obviously, from mere mistake. Arsenic is not consumed, like opium or alcohol, for the sake of the sensation it produces; it causes no exhilaration or intoxication—no bewildering of the judgment; it is swallowed merely as a medicine, that it may bring about certain results; and if, as Dr Inman tells us, it has no such power, the experiment would not be repeated. A course of arsenic is not in question as an experiment, for the result is said to be produced at once: you give a horse, for instance, a dose at the bottom of the hill, that he may be in good enough wind to get easily to the top. We consider, therefore, Dr Inman's concluding paragraph, relative to the proper dose, the most important part of his communication, as it may serve to keep out of mischief those silly or curious persons who might be tempted to tamper with so dangerous a drug merely to try whether it would not improve their complexions.

FORMAL AS CONTRASTED WITH PRIVATE HISTORY.

In Lord Cockburn's *Memorials of his Own Time*, there is an anecdote of Lord Hermand delivering himself in rather queer terms at the trial of a gentleman of Glasgow for the murder of his friend, the fact being, that the two had quarrelled in a drunken bout, and the one had knocked down the other, with scarcely any consciousness of what he was doing. The eccentric judge, who had a respect for drinking, is described as expressing himself thus: 'We are told that there was no malice, and that the prisoner must have been in liquor. In liquor! Why, he was drunk! And yet he murdered the very man who had been drinking with him! They had been carousing the whole night, and yet he stabbed him!—after drinking a whole bottle of rum with him! Good God, my Laards, if he will do this when he is drunk, what will he not do when he is sober?'

We have had the curiosity to look up the account of this trial given in what Lord Cockburn calls the *doited Scots Magazine*, and there we find Lord Hermand's remarks previous to sentence thus reported: 'This case had excited great interest, and had occasioned a long trial, but the evidence had not amounted to anything like murder. It was in many parts contradictory, and no person had seen the fatal blow given. It also appeared that there was no malice in the case, as the parties were in habits of intimate friendship. The quarrel rose from excess of intoxication on the part of the unfortunate gentleman at the bar, and he hoped, for his own sake, he would never allow himself to indulge in the use of fermented liquors. He thought the verdict of the jury proper, and also their recommendation; and for that reason he would propose that the panel should be confined in the tolbooth of Glasgow for the space of six months.'

The difference between the two statements seems too great to be accounted for by variance of reporting, and we conjecture that Lord Cockburn must have set down some private and jocular remarks of Lord Hermand on the case.

There is another justiciary anecdote touched on by Lord Cockburn, but only to correct the erroneous account of the same incident previously given by Mr Lockhart in his *Life of Sir Walter Scott*. It is, as now re-stated by Lord Cockburn, to the effect that Lord Kames, having occasion to preside at the trial of one Matthew Hay, with whom in former days he had been accustomed to play at chess, said half-aside on the return of the verdict, 'That's cheek-mate to you, Matthew!' Here also, we suspect, that memory has played the narrator some trick. Matthew Hay, described as 'farmer in the Holms of Dundonald,' was tried at Ayr in September 1780, for administering arsenic in a pot of *soups* to a neighbouring farmer's family, for the purpose of making away with one of the daughters, Elizabeth Wilson, then about to bear a child, of which he was the father. The farmer and his wife both died, and a daughter, different from the above, lost the use of her limbs. The same doited *Scots Magazine* says: 'On receiving sentence, the pannel [culprit] was greatly affected; but after recovering himself, he addressed the judges, protesting his innocence in strong terms, and saying that a visible judgment would be seen on Elizabeth and Margaret Wilson. The judges heard him with patience, and Lord Kames addressed him, saying, that God and his own conscience best knew his innocence or guilt; that he had got a fair trial, and was now condemned by the laws of his country; and concluded with exhorting him to employ the short time he had to live in making his peace with Heaven, and in preparing himself to appear before the just judge of heaven and earth.'

It is difficult to suppose that Lord Kames would connect with such an admonition as this a jest such as has been stated; but we can readily understand his making such an observation in the inn after dinner. On the other hand, if we are to assume that such words did fall from Lord Hermand in the one case, and Lord Kames in the other, while on the seat of judgment, is there not something very amusing in the success with which the reporter has made all smooth in the printed accounts?

PUBLIC MOURNING IN CHINA.

The testament of one of the late emperor's wives, who died last August, having been submitted to the Board of Rites, that body reported to the reigning emperor thus: The testament of the Great Empress has been printed on yellow paper, according to law, and copies thereof transmitted to the Board of War, to be forwarded to each board and bureau, to the Manchu, and Mangolian Yamuns, &c. On the arrival of the document at its destination, the civil and military officers, together with the elders and gentry of the place, shall remove the buttons from their caps, and proceed in plain attire to the outskirts of the city, and receive it kneeling, and bear it respectfully to the Yamun. Where three prostrations and nine knocks of the forehead on the ground shall be made [before a tablet of the deceased], and where the said officers shall attend, kneeling to the reading; then rise and weep aloud, and repeat the prostrations and knockings of the head [after filing the document]. They shall night and morning, for three successive days, make the three prostrations and nine-head knockings, and weep aloud in the Temple of Longevity [before her tablet]. The mandarins and their wives shall go into mourning for twenty-seven days; there shall be no marriages nor music amongst officials for the space of one hundred days. Nor shall the sound of music be heard among them, other than on marriage occasions, until they are officially informed that the tomb has been completed. There shall be no marriages amongst the people for the space of one month.

EXECUTION OF YOUNG GIRLS BY THE CAREFUL.

Rogers, in his *Table-talk*, has horrified the public by this reminiscence: 'When I was a lad, I recollect seeing a whole cartful of young girls, in dresses of various colours, on their way to be executed at Tyburn. They had been condemned, on one indictment, for having been concerned in—that is, perhaps, for having been spectators of—the burning of some houses during Lord George

Gordon's riots. It was quite horrible.' Horrible indeed! But a writer in *Notes and Queries* mentions, that in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1780 it is stated that only two women were executed, who had been active in pulling down the house of a publican. These were two out of twenty-one persons, the whole number, according to Lord Stanhope's *History of England*, left for execution: all of them the most active of the rioters. Rogers's cartful of young girls were probably on their way to enjoy the spectacle.

HEALING FOR THE SICK.

O LIFE! with thy large aims and petty strivings,
Thy graver purpose that but ill hath sped,
Thy pteuous sowings, and thy small derivings,
Thy feasts at which the spirit is not fed—
Hast thou no sleep that lays a kind cool palm
On aching brows, and bids the breast be calm,
Until death's shadow crosses our repose,
And sighs good-night as the faint eyelids close?

To some fair chamber with bright glimpse of skies,
In hearing of the sweet rejoicing leaves,
With tender lights from those green tapestries
Which the quaint ivy o'er the window weaves;
Or where four walls look grimly on the streets,
On roof-tiles where a parching sunshine beats,
And swoons beneath the never-lifting haze
That creeps along the city's dusky ways—

The Envoy comes, a twilight in his face!
Is he an angel wrapt about with cloud?
Are those veiled features touched with heavenly grace?
Or is't some demon in a dead man's shroud?
In that dream-world of languor where he lies,
So populous with ghostly phantasies,
The sick man knows not, for his sense is dim;
He only feels those eyes are watching him.

Look up! thy tasks are over, and the fires
Of sunset smoulder in the cloudy west;
The tumult of the sultry day expires;
Care's ragged wings are folded to their rest.
I come to lead thee from this land of dreams,
The circle of this pale sun's watery beams,
To broader, fuller light than thou hast known,
Up to the steps of the eternal Throne.

I cross thy threshold—not as comes the thief;
I give thee what thy penury has lacked;
I give thy nobler will the craved relief,
Force to aspire, and energy to act.
Nay, shudder not, nor fear some phantom's grasp;
These friendly hands a brimming chalice clasp;
Here, in a golden cup, I bring thee wine
Pressed from immortal grapes—a draught divine!

E. D. C.

INVULNERABILITY OF POETS.

The true poet is not one who to be pitied, and he is apt to laugh in his sleeve when any misguided sympathiser whines over his wrongs. Even when utilitarians sit in judgment on him, and pronounce him and his art useless, he hears the sentence with such a hard derision, such a broad, deep, comprehensive, and merciless contempt of the unhappy Pharisees who pronounce it, that he is rather to be chidden than condoled with.—*Currer Bell*.

A GOLDEN SAYING.

John Knox, in his *First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*, remarks it as an opinion entertained by some, 'that men subject to the counsel and empire of their wives, were unworthy of all public office.'

Printed and Published by W. and R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH. Also sold by JAMES FRASER, 14 D'Olier Street, DUBLIN, and all Booksellers.